Derren Brown's secrets

Derren Brown by Luke Jermay

Contents;

Reversed Gestalt Moment

Cold Emotion

For Andruzzi

Manipulation of Perception

Silence is golden

The 7th Deception

Reversed Gestalt Moment

Effect:

The performer shows a spectator a playing card - which is then shown to the group and placed face down on the table top or another spectator can look after the card if they so wish.

The spectator who first saw the card is asked to extend her first finger, the performer places great focus on this, he then takes a deep breath and touches the spectators first finger with his own. He then asks the spectator to name the card they saw. The spectator looks around with a dazed expression on her face and can not seem to find the name of the selection. She remains confused and when the card is turned face up is even more so. She will never remember the name of the card she saw.

Method:

This effect is not a pipe dream! I do it, more importantly I do it regularly. It combines some sneaky sleight of hand with some even sneakier psychological trickery.

The basics of the “technical” method is a simple double lift. You begin by cutting two contrasting coloured cards to the top of the deck and then performing a double lift and showing the card(s) to one spectator without allowing anyone else in the group to see the face of the card. You then square the card on the deck and remove the actual top card and show this to all. This card is then either given to some one to hold or as I do placed face down on the floor in front of the spectator or on the table top in full view.

You next cause the spectator to forget the name of the card they saw using some psychological direction:

This is very similar to what Banachek calls “Remedies or the Old Witch Doctor” in his landmark “Psychological Subtlies”. It is similar in the fact that the spectator must firmly believe in your confidence. You must appear self assured and confident, for the effect to work.

Basically you will place so much focus upon the first finger being extended and your touching it that the spectator will assume it had to have taken some effect. This also places their focus away from the card.

You next ask the spectator to name the selection as you do so, you wave your hand at their eye level a few times. This will confuse their thoughts further and help make the time delay longer. I suggest a left to right movement for them in other words, from your right to your left but their left to right, it is more confusing that way.

Spectators have trouble remembering cards at best - with this theatre added in and the next trick, a visual distraction designed to confuse them further will have the effect of rendering them “forgotten”. They will struggle to name the card. At this point they will only struggle - but will, given a minute or so begin to remember things about the card. The first thing will be the colour. But thanks to the combination of the double lift and the psychological work their train of thought is totally blow out of the water - as they begin to remember the colour of the card all those around them will disagree (remember the group saw a different card to the spectator) I then also disagree and turn the card face up to reveal a (for example) black card. This will now throw them deeply into a confused state. And will usually argue hard they saw a red card. This is great, the group will argue back that they defiantly did not. The effect is that the spectator totally forgot the name of the selection.

Above is the basic method for the effect which when performed in a confident and theatrical way will work 100% of the time with great effect. Let us now take a look at the language used in the opening of this effect that will subtly

implant the idea of them forgetting the name of the selection in the first place:

"Lesley would you mind helping.....fantastic. We are going to 'steal a thought' rather than just reading them. Don't worry ***nothing important*** *just the* ***name of a playing card****. Is that* ***OK*** *with you? It will not hurt one bit and will do nothing but* ***totally erase*** *the* ***memory of the playing card****. It will almost be like one of those old films, you know when a scene has been cut and it just jumps from one thing to the next a little* ***confusing*** *but bear with me "*

The text in bold is delivered while maintaining eye contact with the spectator and with a slightly stronger tone to it. The above wording helps to implant in a subtle way some very important elements critical to the effects success. It implants the idea of her being confused, something that will be massively important in a moment or two and also tells her that it is OK for her to be confused. Now have the spectator remember the card (double lift see step 1) and show it to the entire group and place it down on the table top.

"Now ***I want you*** *to just relax and* ***remember*** *how easy it is* ***to forget*** *things. We will remove that memory of that card now. Would you mind just raising your first finger and pointing it toward my own?"*

The words "that card" are used to induce a magnified feeling of isolation from the cards identify that will further help in confusing the spectator. Next I take a deep breath and extend my own finger and touch it to the spectators after very slowly edging it toward hers. I leave it touching for a second or so and then continue:

*"****Now*** *(snap other fingers) what was the name of the* ***card you remembered to forget****...out loud what was the name of that card. (waving hand gesture at eye level to further confuse)* ***out loud now****"*

The above wording helps place the spectator under pressure and will ensure they are further confused. The hand gestures in an arc at the spectators eye level two or three times. You now for a moment or two remain totally silent and stare directly into the eyes of your spectator. She will too remain silent and have a very confused searching look about her face.

She will usually after around a minute or just under say something along the lines of:

"I know it was red....."

At this point the group who are understandably impressed will inform her that it was not. This is the clinching point of this effect. By the group disagreeing with her (when in fact she was beginning to recover her true memories) she will suddenly be further confused and begin to search for new ones. At this point there is no thought of the actual card she saw. She will struggle for a while at which point I say:

"You ***can't remember*** *can you? Take a look....same colour....same shape we*

won't be to picky. Thank you very much for helping. You were great"

The final lines may appear to be simply a "cute" way of finishing but in fact they are more. They are a subtle way of informing the spectator that she did very well and has nothing to feel bad about. And also reinforces the idea of the card she saw being of the colour of the card on the table.

Comments:

I first revealed the full handling of this along with some other of my other work in a book written by Kenton Kneeper entitled: Miracles of Suggestion.

I am very proud of this effect - it works well and has an amazingly clear appearance to the group at large. It has strong theatre inherent in it. Next time you perform some mentalism throw this number in and see what a reaction it can get.

With this effect the words are almost the entire method. I have incorporated many established ideas from the likes of Kenton Knepper and Doc Hilford to name but a few.

Try this - give it the theatrical staging and presentation it deserves and you will have an effect that will really leave them talking.

Cold Emotion

Effect

A group of blank cards are shown - on their faces is written a wide variety of emotional responses. Words that evoke a highly enhanced emotion reaction due to their semantically loaded connotations. The packet of around 50 are given a through shuffle and then spread across the table and seen to be mixed, the deck is squared . A spectator is asked to reach forward and cut to one, look at the emotional response written on the card and to place it in their pocket. This is all done while the performer has turned his back.

The performer turns and faces his audience, he asks the spectator to place herself in a situation she vividly remembers that she associates with the chosen emotion. She is to "imagine yourself in the actual situation place yourself in that very room, with those very people, at that very time and try to allow those emotions all to come flooding back to your conscious.

The performer then goes on to name not only the chosen emotional response but the very scene the spectator is envisaging.

Preparation:

You will need to do a little handy work before this effect will be "ready to roll". Begin by getting yourself a double blank deck. Write down 26 different emotions. These most be emotions that have either conflicting emotions or associated ones. For example if you were to write Love the

conflicted/associated emotion would be Hate. It is in this way you will construct an entire pack. The pack will consist of 26 cards with emotions written on them, and then another 26 cards with the conflicting/associated emotion written on them.

Take the conflict pile and from the short edges of the 26 cards trim a small amount. Now arrange the all the cards in their pairs. For example place the normal Love card with the short Hate card and then on top of this place the normal Pride card followed by the short Embarrassment card. You will now have a pack of cards with emotions written on their faces, which is arranged in pairs (Love/Hate) which will in a moment be handled in the very same way as a Mete Tekel Deck would.

Performance:

1) Begin by removing the pack. Patter about the loaded semantic quality of each of the words unashamedly emblazoned upon the cards for all to see.

2) You all the while appear to be giving the pack a casual in the hands riffle shuffle. You will in fact perform a false shuffle that will rather conveniently leave each of the cards in their respective pairings.

3) To do this simply give the deck and in the hands riffle shuffle with the writing side uppermost. Due to the secret preparation of the deck the pairs will remain in tact. This is due to the Burling Hull Svengali principle. In fact the deck can be handled in the exact same way i.e. shuffle, fan, dribble etc.

4) Next square the cards and have the spectator cut the pack. Look at the top card and pocket it. Have her complete the cut during this action.

5) She will naturally cut directly to one short card, leaving the other card of the original pairing to go to the bottom of the deck. You now turn to face them, pick up the pack and place it into your pocket, it is during this time you catch a sneaky glimpse of the face card of the pack, then you will know which card is being hidden due to the original pairing of the cards. It is not hard as there is no memory involved, just think of the associated/conflicting emotion and your good to go.

6) All that remains is to use your cold reading skills (clue in the title?) to give a fairly decent reading of the imagined situation and finally reveal the word.

Comments:

Depending upon your cold reading skills you can focus the effect in different directs. For example if for some reason your reading is going astray have the spectator think of the word then reveal it. Thus shifting the failure of the reading to a high note of the word revelation. I also suggest using Banachek's "Brain Game" if this happens.

Also it is fairly easy using plain common sense, guess what picture they have

made in association to the chosen card. Use your reading skills and you will have little problem. This is also a very good way to practise cold reading in public with no real fear attached.

The effect is structured in such a way as to for any late comers will look even stronger than it is. For example I, as am I sure you would have also experienced, begin working a table/group at an event I am booked to perform, for only ten minutes into the set have several people try to join the group to watch. If it happens they attempt to join after all the cards are pocketed, the effect is in the super human category. It appears as though the spectator simply thinks of a situation and you describe it and then name the very emotion attached. Another thing I do with this is simply make the pack from a batch of business cards. Leaving the spectator with the pocketed one at the end of the effect. I now only need remove the face card and the effect is reset to go again at the next group. And also need not mention the pocketed card ever again.

Credits:

This effect owes a nod to Max Maven's Mind Sight Deck. Which can be seen on Video Mind Volume One. A description of the Mete Tekel deck can be found on page 256 of The Encyclopaedia of Card Magic.

Alternative Handling; This is simply a nicely structured three way, one ahead prediction, but with the general theme plays very well indeed. In effect the spectator removes one of the business cards and remembers the emotion. You then ask them to concentrate on a person that the link with the emotion. You then stare deeply into their eyes, pick up a slip of paper and write something on it, place it in an envelope and write on the envelope "Person". They are then asked to think of a place they associate with that emotion. Again something is written on an envelope which is marked "Place" this is finally repeated with the very emotion itself. Finally the envelopes are opened and all is found to match exactly. Method: You will need the deck outlined above, three small coin envelops with three slips of paper that fit inside the coin envelopes neatly and a pen. To begin with use the method outlined above to discover which emotion is being thought about. Now you will use the standard one ahead concept coupled with some neat handling to bring the effect to a strong finish. After you know what emotion has been selected ask the spectator to think of a person they link with their chosen emotion. Look deeply into their eyes and pick up one of the slips of paper, hiding it from their view simply write the chosen/peeked emotion on the paper. Pick up the three envelopes and insert the paper writing side downward into the first of the coin envelopes, seal the envelope shut. Now you will perform a double lift with the first two envelopes turning them both over on the third remaining envelope in the hands. On the back of the envelope(s) write the word "person". Flip the two envelopes over once again, as one and move the uppermost one to the

bottom of the three. Ask them the name of the person they were thinking of. When they tell you act as if you knew, and nod confidently. This sequence will be repeated with the next piece of information the place. Pick up one of the slips of paper and write the name they just told you. Repeat the double lift, write “Place” on the lower of the two envelopes turned over as one and being held square with the other envelope. Flip the two over once again as one and move the top one to the bottom. You once again ask them what the name of the place was to “check your impressions are correct” and continue. Finally ask them to focus on the emotion it self and write on the slip of paper what they just told you. Repeat the double lift sequence with the envelope filling in the word “emotion” on the envelope and all that remains is to hand everything out to be opened and show to match perfectly.

For Andruzzi

Effect

The performer talks of how it is possible to gain complete control over all of ones body. He offers to demonstrate and asks for two volunteers. They join him and one is requested to take the performers pulse. Suddenly the pulse begins to slow, it becomes weaker and fainter until it appears to beat no more.

The performer then request he try something a little darker. He asks for second spectator would like to experience “a flirtation with death” the spectator agrees to take part in the effect.

The spectator who originally took the performers pulse is asked to take the pulse of the other spectator. The performer makes one or two gestures around the wrist of the spectator and begins to ask the second spectator what is happening. She with a quietly disturbed look of shock on her face replies;

“The Pulse stopped. I can not find it. It slowed down and then stopped completely.”

The performer waves his hand at eye level of the living dead spectator and suddenly his pulse restarts again.

“Death smiles at each and everyone of us, all we can do is smile back” a comment that closes the strange experience.

Method

The basics of the method lie in the wording coupled with a old and well know method of stopping ones own pulse.

We will begin by examining a method available to stop your own pulse, and then venture further into the effect with the stopping of a strangers pulse.

The basic method of stopping your own pulse is fairly well know and is in fact taught in many beginners books. All that is needed is a hard rubber ball or a plastic golf ball.

Place the ball into your armpit, and then move it down a little bit lower. You will have to experiment a bit to see where it goes exactly on your body. The actual stopping of your pulse is basically self-working due to your physiology.

With the ball in place, ask someone to take your pulse. Allow them to feel your pulse beat for about five to ten seconds and then slowly squeeze the ball with your arm allowing it to go into your body pushing slightly against the inside of your arm.

The squeezing will cause the ball to push on an artery in your arm, causing the blood to stop. This will also cause your pulse to stop in that arm.

I have the ball attached to my pocket on a length of nylon thread that way it can hang freely during my performance and when it is needed it is ready in position.

Many people will be genuinely afraid when you stop your own pulse with apparently no explanation. Personally I relish every moment of any real emotional response I evoke from a spectator, fear is something that can increase the impact of many effects. It is something everyone craves, just take a glance at the box office smash movies, how many are horror?

The structure of the effect is very important. You MUST stop your own pulse before moving on to another's. The reasoning behind this is simple, in a moment you will not actually change any of the pulse rate in your spectator but suggest to the person who is taking the pulse that you are.

This is another good example of the idea of definition = creation. By first stopping ones own pulse, the audience has seen something utterly inexplicable. You have proved your ‘credentials’ and now you can move in for the kill.

This effect shears many similarities with both the opening and the closing effects in this collection. It must be presented with complete and utter confidence.

I personally use an actors technique when performing. I use something called the Silent Script. A idea I am sure many of you are aware of, some chose to ignore it others to use it. I find for certain effects it is of almost vital importance. When I perform this particular effect I using the Silent Script try to force myself into a slightly more somber or darker mode. I want the transformation to be subtle but nevertheless I want it to be apparent. A darker, somber mode has over taken the performer, the implication is (at least hopefully!) we are no longer dealing with mere trickery but something truly wondrous.

Now let us take a look at the wording used to make the effect appear as real as possible. Let us imagine we have joined the performance after the audience has seen the performer slow and stop his own pulse, about to embark on a darker journey. The words in bold are said with either a stronger or lighter tone depending on which works best for you, personally a stronger tone is better.

"Craig would you mind me trying something with you? No, thank you, it will be fine, it **won't** hurt one bit or even **leave any kind of** long term **evidence** of it's happening, but trust me, it will."

The above is said with total authority and confidence. We are as mention earlier using the notion of by defining we create. We have told the spectator we will do something and it will happen. This is a great step forward into suggesting to the audience at large and that something will happen to the male and female spectators assisting. The above wording is very important. You have the possibility of serious messing someone up with this effect. You will after all lead them to think you stopped their pulse. Something that I am sure I need not tell you isn't a particularly cuddly attribute to be credited with. The words in bold help to subtly suggest that nothing will happen after the performance concerning his own pulse and that everything will return to normal after the performance. This is crucially important. I would even at times find the spectator after the show and put their minds further to rest.

"Katerina would you mind, as **you did so well** with **my** own **pulse**, just moving over here and taking Craig's? Thank You.

Here you are suggesting that she did well with your own pulse. She felt it slow down and then stop. She will naturally be a little nervous in front of the crowd, and will wish to find acceptance within them, success is the door to this acceptance. By telling her she did well with your pulse you will suggest that she should be doing that once again. This is to begin with a soft suggestion. It will as the effect progresses be fully suggested using a mixture of linguistic methods.

"**Now** in a moment **Craig,** I am going to **make** some gestures, **you** might **feel** a little twitch, some do some do not. Katerina I want you to after these gestures I want you to be **relaxed** (up until this point this has been said while maintaining eye contact with Craig only after this point you switch eye contact to Katerina) and **concentrate on** taking Craig's pulse as accurately as you can. Not **missing** a beat I think you will find something of interest in Craig's **pulse** or rather I think you will be looking - that will cause the interest"

You have now set up the situation. We have clearly defined what will take place. Katerina and Craig are ready. You have created a relaxed situation for Craig you have implied that something will happen and you have subtly implanted the idea of Katerina not being able to find Craig's pulse. You now will combine this with some pure drama.

Make a pose like position with both hands surrounding Craig's wrist with

Katerina's fingers taking his pulse. Have one hand high above his wrist and one hand low under the wrist. Move the hands slowly together. Make a sudden jolt and then move away and look intently directly at Katerina. You will in fact switch your gaze through Katerina, this will help to confuse her a little.

The implications of the gestures are simple. "Why do that unless it did something?" People assume it must have taken some effect or why the big build up and extravagant gestures? This is the clincher in this effect. The gestures have to be made with dramatic pride and seriousness.

Now comes the closing lines that serve many purposes. They will wrap things up neatly and form an appealing theatrical circle and more importantly let Craig and Katerina know they did well, and have nothing to worry about in the future concerning this strange event.

"**Katerina** concentrate on the **pulse not** missing a single beat can you **feel it**? it becomes slower **right**? (here nod while maintaining eye contact and they will agree) it becomes so slow, it is still becoming slower correct? (again use the nod technique here) in fact it becomes so slow **you can't feel it anymore** yes? **Nothing**, **no** beat, **not a thing** it has **gone correct**? Don't worry you have done **fantastically**."

Katerina will during the above wording be a little surprised/scared by the sudden lack of pulse. There are many things in your favour here when it comes to her actually losing the pulse. She is nervous, she doesn't wish to fail in front of an audience. She will often, even if she can not feel a pulse claim she has one simply to save her self from looking foolish. She ill then go along with the effect of it stopping because it offers a way out of an potentially embarrassing situation for her. This happens more often than one would first think, people have trouble finding pulses anyway, and in this effect that can only be a good thing!

You have also let her know that she has nothing to feel bad about, she has in no way whatsoever failed. In fact she was a total success. Now comes the closing lines for Craig and for the entire piece;

"**Craig** it is **ok**, because just as **quickly** as it went **it** can instantly **come back**. Reach forward concertrate your attention on my finger reach out and touch it. Perfect, now **you are fine right**? Katerina you may check if you would like to see **Craig's pulse** is **perfectly normal as it was moments ago."**

Again in the above many methods are at work. We are using the definition = creation rule, as well as the extravagant gesture and finally subtly logistic cueing.

When these methods are so combined it becomes chilling to watch. Even more so when dealing with the idea of life and death.

I finish the effect by wrapping everything up as follows:

“It seems to me not one of us truly holds the key to the all the secrets hidden within a single heartbeat, for it is the secrets of life itself locked away with that split second. It appears we all face death, the only thing we can do is smile right back at it. Thank you both for your help you were both wonderful”

Comments;

This is an effect I thought long and hard about printing. To me this is a scary effect. It does insight genuine fear with the spectators but also genuine intrigue. I personally find this effect a wonderful combination of what Kenton would call Weerdness and pure Drama.

I feel this is best classed as Bizarre Magick. It is a routine that I have used as a method of bridging a mental performance and a Bizarre performance. It works very well in this way.

For those who are interested I actually do not use the ball method all the time - on page 312 of The Compleat Invocation their is a detailed description of slowing and stopping your own pulse using only muscle control. I use this often making this demonstration an impromptu piece of strangeness.

I am proud of this effect it appears much larger than the sum of it’s parts. I imagine that Tony Andruzzi is looking up and smiling that devilish grin every time I perform this.

I truly hope he would have enjoyed it as much as do. Here is an interesting final thought - something I confess I have only actually performed once or twice unlike the rest of the effect which is part of my working act. Anyway, after doing the effect described above I once again have someone take my own pulse and then ask the audience (this is idea is intended if you were using this as a stage piece) to take the pulse of the person next to them. Then I go through the slowing and stopping procedure - eventually stopping my own pulse. I then ask all those people in the audience that felt an unusual sensation in the pulse rate stand. More often than not half or even more of your audience will stand. This is think is largely due to two reasons. Firstly many people will find the task of finding a pulse difficult. Thus they into their minds have felt the pulse stop and will stand. Also the use of none specific language i.e. an unusual sensation - this could be anythign! this helps to ensure a decent amount of people stand. I would you this idea to close my performance, I would ask all those who felt an unusual pulse rate to stand and lead in a round of applause. They would do this, and when people stand and applaud, other follow. This is a neat way to build in a "standing ovation" into your act. I must thank Craig Browning for this fine suggestion. Something I feel is almost worth the price of the book.

Manipulation of Perception Effect The performer removes a folded square of paper and unfolds and shows it to one of the two spectators that previously joined the performers table. He is asked to make a mental note of what the paper said and not to forget it. The paper is then shown to the

other spectator again with the request he not forget it and make a mental note of what the word on the paper said. The paper is once again folded and placed in the centre of the table for all to see. The performer talks of how easy it is to manipulate a perception using subtle but remarkably effective suggestion. He then ask the spectator on the right to say out loud exactly what word he saw written on the paper. He replies “wok” the performer then asks the second spectator who replies “boom”. The performer remarks how it is interesting that the suggestion has worked in that way. He then fairly unfolds the paper to reveal the word “the” on the paper. Proving that suggestion can be a powerful thing indeed.

Method

This is a nice effect to perform the method is somewhat ballsey (if that is a word) but when done correctly is a very effective demonstration of suggestion. This is not a show stopper but is a brilliant way to open or as currently I use this, as a second from opening position.

Begin by obtaining a sheet of thick somewhat heavy artists card. This is used to ensure that no ink filters through the paper exposing what is on it early.

Now tear a sheet into quarters. Throw two away as they are not needed. On one of the quarters write the word “woq” ensure all the letters are written in lower case. Make sure you use a square piece of paper, and be careful to write the word diagonally running from one corner to the other. Do not simply write it in the centre of the square.

This slip of paper hosts an interesting written deception that I feel will lead to impressive applications. Essentially the principal utilizes words that can be read either way around. For example the word “did” can be read as the word “pip” when the paper is rotate 180 degrees. In this example you would not dot the I and keep the letters in a lose line. Another good example of these rotatable letters would be a lower case H (h) when rotated 180 degrees it will appear as a lower case Y (y) it doesn't work at all well on computer but when you hand write these letters you are free to experiment with the structure and the form of the words to add to the deception. Many letters will work in this rotation system. (lower case) a, w, m, n, u, p, b, d, q, h, y, f, t, l, l, x and z can all be used in the rotation system. It is important that the words be written on a perfectly square billet for the routine that follows. By employing the rotation system you eliminate the need for flap billets and cut down the switching work radically. What follows is the most apparent use of these words employed to achieve a surprising and interesting effect of suggestion. Basically three different spectators see the same word as three different words. Their perception of the written word is seemingly manipulated due to your influence over their perception. You will notice that, if you write the word “woq” on a billet it can be read as “woq” but if you rotate the paper 180 degrees it will read “bom”.

Now on the second quarter write any small word (preferably three letters I use the word “the”) Fold this and the woq/bom in exactly the same way. It is also

a good idea to mark these in some identical way a smudge on the back of the paper or something similar. You will not mention this but it will be silently noticed by your spectators.

Finger palm the billet reading “the” and display the woq/bom billet at the fingertips. Unfold the billet at the fingertips and show it to a spectator on your right side. Instruct them to make a mental note of the word on the paper now drop the paper writing side down, to the table.

Pick it up and the billet from the table ensuring the writing is only visible to the spectator on the left. As you pick up the billet you simply grasp the diagonal opposite corner to the one previously held. This will unnoticed, turn the billet 180 degrees changing what is written on the paper.

“I would like to try a little exercise in the manipulation of perceptions. That’s right the twisting through suggestion of something real. I actually performed this recently and after my show a lady came up to me and commented on how she could actually see the writing warp and change in front of her very eyes. I would like you to just take a quick glance at this (show paper with word bom on it) I would like you to read it to yourself and remember exactly how it sounds and exactly the way you say it.”

Ask the spectator on the left to remember what he reads. He will read a different word to the previous spectator. This is an interesting written linguistic deception. It is effective on many levels, firstly when later you will ask the spectators to verbalise what they saw they will say what was written phonetically this is another big advantage, the words “Boom” and “Wok” sound very different and if anyone visualises what those words would look like when written down, they will see words with radically different structures.

Now comes the billet switch. You will switch the billet containing the “gimmicked” writing (woq and bom) for the folded, finger palmed billet with the word “the” written on it. This will act in very much the same way as the switched card does in the opening effect of this collection. It serves as the information that causes the spectators to seriously doubt their own mind it throws them into a confused state.

I drop the switched in billet with the word “the” written on it, in a folded condition to the table. I then discuss the power of suggestion and hand the billet to another spectator to open and read. Any simple billet switch will do here.

I then ask each person one after the other, to a sound out loud what they saw. This is a very strange moment to the audience. Suddenly three different people saw the same writing in three differing ways. I often act surprised at the way in which the suggestion has occurred. This is an interesting point, by my acting surprised the idea of suggestion is underlined. Suggestion would be different each time, each person reacting differently to a suggestion.

Now for the script:

“I would like to try a little exercise in the manipulation of perceptions. That’s right the twisting through suggestion of something real. I actually performed this recently and after my show a lady came up to me and commented on how she could actually see the writing warp and change in front of her very eyes. I would like you to just take a quick glance at this (show paper with word bom on it) I would like you to read it to yourself and remember exactly how it sounds and exactly the way you say it.”

(There are a multitude of deceptions within the introduction and the showing of the word on the paper. The showing of the word on the paper I am making use of some subtle double speak, the audience will understand that the person is reading a word and saying it to himself, the spectator will know he is to read the word and say it phonetically.)

“Perfect. Now here comes the strange part. I would like you to look at the very same piece of paper and again just read it silently to yourself and remember exactly how it sounds read it over in your mind.

So you Daniel have read a word and you Morica have read the word correct? which we will get back to in a moment. (Place the switched billet to table) In fact I would like you to also look at the word” (Hand the paper to another audience member.)

Here the use of the words “you looked at the word” will subtly imply they all saw exactly the same word, it highlights the relationship between the words and the spectators.

“How much are you going to freak out when you realise what just happened? Let me explain, or rather I will ask you to explain, Daniel would you just say out loud what you read to your self. Perfect, now Morica would you also say the word out loud. (Says a different word to first spectator) Perfect. Finally John would you just open the paper and read the word out loud to all.”

The words used have been chosen carefully and all add to the impact of the routine. A lot is actually suggested about yourself during the performance of a sure fire effect. This subtle suggestion will actually help to create the illusion of suggestion with ease. When it actually comes to working real suggestion the above “breaking in” aids the performer greatly.

<u>Comments;</u>

This is, as mentioned a neat and self contained demonstration of suggestion or even if you were to spin a darker warn “manipulation of thought” or even in a really melodramatic form “mind control” .

It is a nice opening effect that can help to set up any real suggestion needed further in your set. I currently use this as a second to opening effect.

<u>Silence is Golden.</u>

Effect:

A spectator is handed a pen and a pad of paper. She is shown a standard set of ESP symbols. A Star, Circle, Wavy Lines, Square and finally a Cross.

The performer instructs her to, in a moment when his back is turned to draw one of the designs on the paper and then hide that piece of paper in her pocket. He will do the same.

She does this, and the performer turns to face the spectator once again. He concentrates for a brief moment and then, boldly states that the picture of the Wavy Lines is in the spectators left jacket trouser pocket.

Which he them goes onto show he also has draw is in the very same pocket as the spectator.

Method

This is a really fun thing to perform. It has an element of danger that I find attractive and helps to keep the performer on his toes.

Basically you are going to “listen” to the ink coming from the pen. As strange as that sounds it is exactly what will happen. Allow me to elaborate. After explaining the set of symbols - you indecently, will use the ESP symbols for a good reason. This “Pen Reading” becomes very easy when the ESP Symbols are used, you have apparently justifiably restricted the spectators choice.

Another reason to use the symbols is simply because it makes everything easy. For a moment take a thick marker pen and a sheet of paper. Draw each of the symbols and listen intently to what each sounds like. You will notice that each has a distinct difference to it.

For example - the circle will sounds as one long continuous sound. This is due to the Circle being one continuing line. The Cross will be two sharp but separate sounds in close succession. The Wavy Lines is very similar but with three sounds each following one another in quick sharp bursts. The Square will be a sharp, almost jagged sounding burst that will last for a longer time that the others, and will again be separated in three or four separate burst following each other quickly. The Star will be a longish jagged and sharply changing continuous line that will last a little longer than the Circle.

This all sounds terribly complicated but in practice is actually really simple. I recommend using a thick marker pen a sharpie or even thicker is well suited. You should also use a fairly thick paper stock that has some “grain” to it. In England a very cheap pad that has a bright red cover with black “Bumper Value Pad” that is sold almost everywhere in stationers etc is perfect. Any paper that has a “shine” to it will help in making more noise from the pen.

Sit down and try this “Pen Reading” and you will see just how easy this is. Now the hiding in pocket is a simple psychological suggestion. Essentially you will pay no attention to the pocket, it is made to seem as if it is of no real importance. I when instructing the spectator on what she is to do. I say “and then slip it into your pocket” and as this is said I place my hand or tap the outside of, my right trouser pocket. Nearly always the spectator will take this suggestion if it is handled in a nonchalant way, confidence is the key here. Even if the spectator doesn't follow this there is a neat handling to cover yourself. Which we will cover in the script which follows.

Picture yourself joining the group just after the legendary ESP tests by Dr. Rhine had been discussed and the ESP symbols have been introduced and explained.

“I am going to try something else, in fact this is one of the hardest things that I do. People often ask why is it that some people can read thoughts and other can not. The answer is very simple. People just don’t practice. In fact the best way to practice such a thing is by trying to build a psychic relationship with another person. This is exactly what we are going to do.”

A lady is handed a pad of paper and a pen. The performer displays five cards each with a different symbol printed on it. The symbols outlined earlier in the presentation.

“As intuitive and intelligent as you are, you would have to agree you are not psychic correct? We could just sit here and discuss exactly what that means but instead lets actually try something. How surprised would you be in you were in fact a person with some unused psychic potential. I would like you to think of one of the designs and in a moment draw it on the paper. Then place that sheet of paper into your pocket”

As the above is delivered you casually tap your right pocket or even place your hand into your pocket. This is done while you maintain eye contact and act as if it is of no importance. You now turn your back, and listen for the tell tale sounds outlined earlier in the text, after you have decided which design she has chosen you draw the same one on a piece of paper and place it in your right trouser pocket. After the performer enquires if the spectator has finished he turns and faces her and continues on.

“Obviously I don’t know what you have draw or even where you put it. You put that paper in your pocket while my back was turned. I would like you to relax and focus.”

The performer faces forward and concentrates closes his eyes and touches his forehead, for a moment and finish with.

“I am someone who is generally highly critical of myself but this is not a negative thing, it is rather more like positive reinforcement, I more than anyone have learnt great lessons from my previous mistakes and have no intention of repeating them”

This is an idea of Kenton's, he uses it in a Psedu Pschometery routine. The spectator releases that the performer is not talking about himself and takes the brief cold reading draw from any of your stock statements as being relevant to himself. I then reveal what shape he has draw and continue with the following:

“A highly critical person would generally go for straight sharp and crisp lines, as they wish to keep everything clean cut and well organised, they ten to go directly to the point with no hesitation, and in fact you chose the Square correct?”

The spectator agrees with a confused look in her eyes. Apparently the audience have witness a demonstration of mutual mind reading.

Here obviously, you simply improvise a statement that relates to your first “Stock Reading Line” and then tie it in with the selected design.

Now, at this point it is possible to repeat the effect minus the hiding sequence, simply stand back to back again and have the spectator draw a symbol and you using your new fluency in “Pen Talk” decide which of the designs has been selected. Now simply draw the same design, now you have an effect that appears to be a design duplication. Especially if you use non - specific language and play down the restriction of the ESP cards.

For those of you afraid of the psychological suggestion required for the hiding sequence try the following.

After standing back to back and drawing and hiding the designs, turn and face the spectator. Now, move a few foot away from him/her (I find it better to use a man in this effect, they tend to be less gentle and make more noise when writing) and place your hand, palm outstretched roughly in line with the spectators right trouser pocket and state:

“You chose to draw the X (name the correct design) and you placed it there. (now quickly point with your first finger to a general direction of the spectators pocket) Remove it and show everyone”

You seem to be paying no attention to the place the paper is. By acting confident and giving a quick point of the finger the audience will be lead to think that you knew full well, where the paper was hidden. The spectator will not challenge you on this as he will think that he is to remove it and show the audience that you were correct in naming the design.

<u>Comments:</u>

This effect incorporates much from many sources. The methodology was inspired by the wonderful thinking of Docc Hilford and Tony Andruzzi and the script leans heavily towards Kenton Knepper’s brilliant Wonder Words, beneath the surface their is much more going on thanks to the script and to Kenton‘s inspiring teaching.

The 7th Deception

With the 7th deception we are moving into an area that some may find a little shocking or even scary. Not that there is anything about the effect that is remotely frightening despite the possibility of it falling under the umbrella term bizarre magick.

The actual methodology may startle some, but for those who already understand the full power of suggestion and psychological staging this will be a heart warming piece, as it is for me. This is a real joy to perform.

Since the beginning of time man has had once thing in common. Man has always reached out and helped those around him. This is something that will never change, we need only look to recent events to see just how far people are willing to go in order to help another human being - something that is truly magical.

•?effect:

In effect you remove a spectators phobia (for example a fear of spiders) through a grandiose, theatrical ceremony.

A neatly almost deliberately wrapped package is placed onto the table. A lit candle is placed onto of the package. A piece of paper is removed and handed to the spectator who is asked to wrote their deepest fear on the paper - explaining that yours is spiders, they are to scribble a similar kind of phobia on the paper. Which they are to fold and place onto the table just in front of the burning candle.

They are apparently placed into an altered state, although still with their eyes wide open, they are asked to look intently into the flame, they begin to look more and more disorientated. The performer lifts the folded square of paper to the flame - it appears to burst into a bright flame, suddenly it is over as quickly as it started, the paper is seen to still be in the folded condition. It is passed to the spectator and unfolded - their writing has seen to disappeared.

The performer remarks “a gift for you to keep with you to remind you of the time you overcame your phobia beating those spiders”

•?method;

Right here goes. This is not going to be easy, and in fact a book ten times the size of this one would still find this difficult. Let us deal with the purely magical aspects first. The vanish of the spectators writing is a very strong and almost poetic moment.

Have a square of flash paper in your pocket, the candle on the table (see end about this important point) in your other pocket have a folded slip of paper that resembles the flash paper. It doesn't have to be exact - often this effect will

be performed at the end of my set in private dinner parties and more often than not actually in candle light.

1) It is simply a billet switch dressed up. They are handed a square of flash paper to begin with, onto which they write their phobia. As you replace the pen into your pocket you steal the folded slip of normal paper into a finger palm position.

2) To cause the vanish to occur simply touch the lower corner of the FP to the candle as you produce the second folded slip from finger palm it looks as though nothing has changed. This is a very powerful moment. Your hands are clean (I take great pleasure knowing I just, in front of audience, burnt all evidence of the deception!) You can now immediately hand the folded slip to your spectator. This is a hassle free, but utterly powerful theatrical moment that has real power (in context) to touch your spectator.

Now for the real magic. The words that makes this an elegant and joyful deception are what make it so powerful. It bears many similarities with the opening effect of this book reversed Gestalt moment it shears the same staging. You must be utterly sure of yourself. You must place all the importance into the ceremony aspect of the effect. Make it feel like something special and rare.

This is very similar to what Banachek calls “Remedies or the Old Witch Doctor” in “Psychological Subtlies”. It is similar in the fact that the spectator must firmly believe in your confidence. You must appear self assured and confident, for the effect to work. You will place some much importance on the candle flame that when the burst of flame appears they will assume that it had to have taken some kind of effect.

I use this as a closing effect (in dinner party performances & intimate situations only). My audiences are already sure of what I can do, I recommend using this as a closing piece, after you have proved your credentials it‘s impact will be even stronger.

Another strong tactic that is employed is the idea of to par phrase Kenton, by defining we create. This alone is often enough to send the spectators over the edge. If we look at this carefully again using the opening effect in the book to draw direct comparisons with, you actually tell them you will remove a thought (in the first effect of the book), they are expecting it. Assuming you have chosen a ready and willing spectator this is often enough to cause the spectator to forget their thought completely.

This has exactly the same power in all routines it, and it can be applied to so many. In the 7th Deception it works especially well, as you will see when we come to the script. Even before anything has happened you have built a positive atmosphere. An atmosphere that feels safe, secure and helpful. This is especially important when dealing with someone's fears.

Another strong psychological point in this effect is the handing of the paper to

the spectator. Something that if you deeply examine the effect could be said to be reprehensive of themselves. They will due to the script be genuinely afraid during the opening and middle part of the routine, this is not done in order to embarrass or for shocks sake it has an important effect. They are afraid, they will seek a resolve to their fear, when the paper is ignited acts as a sudden release from the fear, the anxiety will come rushing out and they will feel very relaxed and good about themselves. Handing the folded paper to the spectator is an unconscious way of saying “there, that wasn’t so hard, you struggled but you came out the other side stronger and unharmed.”

When they unfold the paper and the writing has gone, they begin to associated their feelings of happiness and the blank paper. After they have been released from their fear the natural high that follows will massively exaggerated by using the blank paper for those of you familiar with NLP this is a very good moment to trigger an anchored reaction to further exaggerate it. You must give the paper to them as a gift, and more importantly it must be left totally blank. No printing business cards on it! This is a personal moment between you and your spectator. This paper is meant to act as a trigger for them overcoming the fear they feel when they are in a situations when their phobia comes to the surface. I actually had one woman carry the paper with her at all times in her wallet and remove it every time she saw her phobia (birds), she told everyone of the wonderful man who had helped her calm her fear so effectively. This is far better advertising that a crude and tacky attempt of stamping your card on a deeply personal moment, there is a time and a place for such things - this is not it.

Another point that is incorporated into the sequence is the use of the flame to induce a strange state. There is nothing remotely difficult about this, it is simply what happens when one looks at a candle for an amount of time, the flames become almost hypnotic - of course you will take credit for this strange state occurring in your spectator. This is again exaggerated in the script using the definition = creation rule spoke of earlier.

Now for the script:

Words emboldened are said with more emphasis.

“ Has anyone of **you** here tonight got a **phobia**, something you just can’t stand being around...(pause for a beat)...well I do spiders. I **hate** spiders, not the tiny little ones there OK I mean those hairy, horrible, long legged ones that seem to run quicker than an athlete. I think I comes from when I was a younger child and I woke up with a massive, hairy spider running across my face”

(Fans of Wonder Words will notice much under the surface of an apparently innocent remark)

I am genuinely afraid of spiders by the way. It is a good idea to draw on something you really do fear as this will be communicated in your voice making the whole presentation much more sincere and honest appearing.

“but it is OK, I managed to quite **quickly overcome my fear**, beating those long legs and totally **loss my fear**. In fact **I had my fear taken away really**, by a friend of my who tried an old wives tale on me - the only difference between it and an old wives tale is, well **it works**! I have since the done it with **hundreds** of **people** and out of all those times I can only remember one or two instances when it failed.”

(Setting up in case it doesn’t totally work) In fact this is an effect that can never really fail. The vanish of the paper in the flame acts as a definite moment for the magic to occur and often the spectators only truly know if they have beaten their fear much after the performance.

“so is there anyone here who has a phobia**, spiders** as an example.”

I use the spiders example as you want to being dealing with a fairly common/trivial phobia for example you couldn’t work with someone who has agoraphobia or any other life intruding phobia this is theatre not treatment.

“Perfect ...you are afraid of? (allow them to answer and even talk for a moment or two about their phobia) I would like you if you would, to write the phobia on this piece of paper (FP) than fold it and place it just in front of the candle. Perfect. Now just **relax** and really calm **down**.”

Here you shift your gaze slightly so it actually shots through them, and then begin to mirror there own breathing pattern, gradually slowing your own, this will thrown them into a receptive and helpful state.

“I would like **you** to **focus** all your **attention** on the **flame**, watch it as it dances away in front of your eyes, just **keep** your **attention firmly** on that f**lame** and watch it’s flirtatious flicker”

Throughout what follows if there gaze is removed from the flame at any time directly softly back onto the flame.

“Now I want you to **imagine** that **around** that **flame** is a box, it has in it all **your** deepest and **darkest fears**, they are al inside just **waiting to get** to **you**, **waiting to reach out** and **touch you** but it is ok, remember they are inside the box so they can not get to you, they can not reach out and **touch you**.”

This should be said with an air of importance I emphasis the words by tightly making two fists and gesturing with them. Repeat the above language once or twice more each time getting more emphatic.

On the final time you will say the following:

“Right now **keep** your **attention** focused on that **flame** and the box with all your deepest, **darkest fears scratching away** from the inside desperate to get and reach out and **touch you**, desperate to **reach forward** and claim you as theirs, desperate to **reach out and grab you** (clap your hands loudly) and

now the **box breaks** and they are **all out** in the open, but **your ok**."

This has to be done with strong emphasis and body language. In some of my most extreme cases I have had spectators claiming they can feel something touching them. This is another built in linguistic trick, it doesn't often happen but when it does it is worth that extra scripting. As you say "your OK" you perform the flash paper vanish sequence described earlier in the explanation and then hand the folded paper to the spectator and continue on with;

"Just like the flame fear can dance and flirt with us but we have to remember that **we are the ones that control our fears not the there way around.** We are the ones with the **power to extinguish** those **fears** just like the candle flame. (blow out the flame) Leaving nothing, nothing but a memory of a fear we once felt. A fear we not longer feel, a fear we no longer need a fear that is **no longer written** into our personality."

I gesture toward the paper, they will open it and be in deep shock. I then close with the following:

"Please _____ (insert name here) keep the paper as a **memory** of the **fear you no longer feel**, a trigger for the **extinguishing** of the **fear** you **once felt**. A gift. **Thank You** all for your kind attention"

•?end notes:

I know I have taken much paper and ink to describe this effect. I felt it needed to go this in depth with at least one of the linguistic deceptions. Hopefully the in depth explanation will help you better understand the other linguistic effects.

The candle is the most important prop in the effect it helps if it is a smallish one with an old looking holder, to further increase the ceremonial feel of the effect. You will notice in the description of the effect I mentioned a wrapped bundle which the candle sat upon - in my own performances the wrapped bundle is a tarot deck. I use this to close my performance and then offer some private readings. I feel this is an effect that departs from the normal fan fair of magical effects and enters a more personal area enough to lead into a reading.

Steve Banachek sent me the following suggestion after reading my original routine via email, it appears here with his permission:

"Great effect, not sure it would add or not, but how about having them write the fear, fold hand back, you place in front of the candle. Now continue, but instead of asking the phobia, you begin to talk about the phobia and describe it and finally naming it specifically. Just use any peak method, acidus comes to mind. Now when ready, pick up fear and continue as before. Now it is kind of a two punch routine. Again, the effect seems strong enough by itself, so this is just a half suggestion."

One last thing. Please remember this is theatre not treatment. It will help and in some cases remove a phobia , based on the psychological aspects of the effect but it will not cure some one of a life intrusive phobia. Your nor I am a doctor and it is a good idea to remember that.